

Interview with Warren Musch
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Excerpt from Interview # 2: October 18, 2012
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DePue: Let's talk about the invasion plan, and I think we've got a map of the plan as well. At least this is a pretty rough estimation, but does that look familiar to you?

Musch: Yes.

DePue: Where would the Sixth Marines be in?

Musch: See the blue arrow on the left side?

DePue: Yeah.

Musch: That's where we'd land.

DePue: Is that Kyushu Island?

Musch: Yes, Kyushu.

DePue: What was the date they were projecting for that invasion?

Musch: November, but I can't think of the day. November of '45.

DePue: That's still quite a few months away. What did you think about the battle plan, and especially about the estimation of casualties that we were looking at at the time?

Musch: I had privy to the information almost immediately because of my position. After I got into it for a while, I suddenly thought that, Gee, with as many people involved and as bad as it was to fight the Japanese on Iwo Jima, this would be still closer to their homeland. It would be a more difficult situation forever, because they fought to the last man on Iwo. They would do so on Kyushu. The other thing I found out, too, that the artillery used planes for spotters. In the plan, those planes were to take off from the aircraft carrier, and we were to secure a place for them to land. Otherwise, they'd just ditch at sea or crash.

DePue: Did you see any estimates of the casualties they were expecting?

Musch: Yes. The invasion of Kyushu was to be in November. Following March was to be an invasion of the homeland, on Tokyo Plain. Fourteen divisions on Kyushu, three Marine and eleven Army. On Tokyo Plain, twenty-eight divisions involved, three Marine and twenty-five Army. Three million men involved in the operation, minimum, and at least a million casualties.

DePue: Typically, how would that equate to the number of deaths?

Musch: I never got into the part of that, but on Iwo, your wounded were about—three wounded, one killed.

DePue: In other words, an awful lot of mothers and sweethearts would be getting letters.

Musch: That's true. The more I knew about it, the more I felt that I would not survive if it came about. So that's why I say the atomic bomb saved my life.

DePue: The atomic bomb, that's what I was getting to. Did you know anything about the development of the bomb?

Musch: No.

DePue: And the bomb on Hiroshima was dropped on August sixth.

Musch: Yes.

DePue: Do you remember hearing that news?

Musch: Yes.

DePue: What was your reaction?

Musch: I thought, Gee, if they don't surrender now, they sure ought to.

DePue: Did you start to get a little bit hopeful?

Musch: Yes. Then on—

DePue: The ninth?

Musch: Ninth, when they dropped the one on Nagasaki, why then I thought, Gee, they've got to quit now. Fourteenth, I think, is when they actually surrendered, and that's when we ran out in the streets and celebrated. Everybody was hooping and hollering and carrying on. And my job ended.